

Minutes April 7, 2021  
Egremont Bylaw Review Committee

In Attendance:

Mary McGurn, Chair (MM)  
Richard Allen (RA)  
Steve Goodman (SG)  
Richard Slutzky (RS)  
Eileen Vining (EV)  
Lucinda Vermeulen (LV), guest  
Steve Cohen (SC), guest

A quorum being present, MM called the meeting to order at 4:06pm. MM introduced committee members present and guests.

Minutes of March 29, 2021 were approved with a minor change.

**Bylaw 3.5.1**

RA initiated discussion regarding the permitting of Finance Committee members to sit on town committees other than their own.

The discussion included the following points:

Pros:

1. Members of the Finance Committee can provide invaluable advice to local committees.
2. There are no State prohibitions against Finance Committee members participating as voting members of other committees as long as the members of those committees are not elected to such committee.
3. Since the SelectBoard appoints individuals to a committee, there is a check and balance in place to offset the possibility that such an appointment of a member from the Finance Committee does not result in undue influence. Additionally, Finance Committee members could recuse themselves from Finance Committee decisions.
4. If a Finance Committee member were appointed as a "nonvoting" member to another committee, their participation may not carry the same weight as voting members.
5. There are a limited number of volunteers to staff the town's various volunteer committees. The pros outweigh the cons if allowing Finance Committee members to be appointed to other committees will answer the need for qualified volunteers.

Cons:

1. Appointing a Finance Committee member may engender undue influence within the Finance Committee on behalf of the other committee.
2. The Finance Committee member who sits on another committee may lose their objectivity when reviewing matters before the Finance Committee pertaining to that committee.

3. There could be the “have” committees which include a Finance Committee member and “have-not” committees which would not have a Finance Committee members--there may not be an equal playing field on budgetary issues.

After discussion, RA moved the motion to change a sentence in 3.5.1, the draft of which currently reads:

*Members of the Finance Committee shall not hold any other town office or be on any other Board other than ad hoc committees, to: **Members of the Finance Committee shall not hold any elected Town office.***

The motion to approve this change was approved.

### **Bylaw 6 Finances of the Town**

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the operation of the various revolving funds listed in the existing Bylaw 6. It was agreed that the question of whether to maintain each of the listed revolving funds as well as consider additions is a policy issue for the Selectboard to address.

**The Committee agreed to eliminate 6.1.2 under Bylaw 6 since it is duplicative to 9.2 under Bylaw 9.**

The Committee agreed to hold over further discussion of Bylaw 6 to the next scheduled meeting.

SC raised the issue and the Committee discussed how to present these manifold changes to the Bylaws to the SelectBoard and Town once we have completed our revisions. This discussion will continue while the Committee completes its review of all current general bylaws.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 5:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Slutzky